

Thought for the Day, 22nd April 2020

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the immigrant. I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 23.22.

All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. Galatians 2.10.

There's no question that our collective response to the threat of COVID-19 has included a great upsurge of generosity and concern that the frail, the elderly and all the vulnerable are looked after and provided for. Very many local communities have found the resources to organise a spontaneous system of care which everyone knows how to access. This is one of the truly heartening things about our current situation, and it would be a tremendous blessing if this spirit were to continue when the threat of infection has subsided.

But looking beyond our local communities to the wider, global picture, it is noticeable that the hardest hit countries so far have been among the richer nations in Europe and North America. The full force of the pandemic has yet to be seen in the poorest countries in Africa and Asia, for example. Some experts predict that if, or rather when, it does the consequences for the human populations will be far worse than anything we have seen so far. This is because the same level of developed medical care is unavailable, living conditions are often insanitary, and 'social distancing' may be impossible in some of the slums and shanty towns where people are crowded together. Add to this the fact that in the UK it is noticeable that the worst affected section of the population, for whatever reason, is among the Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME), and the outlook for the poorer nations of the world is not good.

So it is a concern that reports indicate a marked decline in charitable giving to international aid agencies, including Christian ones, since the outbreak of coronavirus in this country began. One can see why this has happened; our attention is focused on a crisis at home. But it is a world crisis affecting the whole of humanity, and we know that God cares for all. So we must hope that our generosity will flow out to other countries as the virus takes hold in new places. And above all, let's pray for those scientists who are striving to find an effective vaccine.

John Tiller

Remember, you can send your prayer request to: Prayer@baystonhillchurch.org

Or ring: (01743) 583215